

# **News**

Macomb County  
Office of Public Affairs



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## **Macomb Bands together for homeless care**

MOUNT CLEMENS, Mich. – Macomb County banded together to help victims of a faraway hurricane; now the need is close to home.

Macomb County today announced a new campaign to raise financial donations from residents and businesses all over the county to provide for the basic needs of Macomb's own homeless.

*MACOMB TOGETHER/Helping at Home* aims to immediately help the homeless of Macomb County who are unable to get assistance from public and private agencies because of increased demand for dwindling resources.

Macomb County has more than 1,100 homeless people and in 2005 alone, 11 have died. The county's homeless population grew 5 percent in the past year. Yet Macomb County has only slightly more than 350 beds available for emergency shelter.

"This isn't the holiday season for the homeless, it's the cold season," said Nancy White, chair of the Macomb County Board of Commissioners. "The Macomb County's homeless face is no less than what the victims of Katrina experienced down south: no home, no food, unhealthy conditions and the real risk of death."

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All funds collected by the MACOMB TOGETHER/Helping at Home program will go to the Macomb Homeless Coalition or the Macomb Food Program. Both are 501(c)(3) organizations, and all checks should be made out to one of those two organizations.

Beginning immediately, anyone wishing to help the homeless in Macomb County will be able to mail a check to a single address or drop off cash or checks at six locations throughout Macomb County. The address is: **Macomb Together, Mount Clemens, MI 48043.**

“We have brothers and sisters, fellow human beings, right here in Macomb County that lack even the basic needs we all take for granted – a warm place to sleep, a shower and regular hot meals,” said Frank Taylor, director of the Macomb County Community Services Agency (MCCSA). “But our growing homeless population is outstripping our ability to give assistance. We all have to respond to this crisis now.”

According to Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS), 1,141 of its Macomb County clients meet the DHS definition for homelessness. Of those, 21 percent are children. Nearly all of the homeless (90 percent) care for a small child, are victims of domestic violence, are incapacitated, or care for an incapacitated child or spouse.

“More than half of our homeless population have at least a part-time job, but they can’t afford a place to live, for themselves or their family,” said Carrie Fortune, coordinator for the Macomb County Homeless Coalition. “The number of homeless is increasing and we can’t keep pace.”

All residents, businesses, governments, schools, teachers, parents and children are invited to donate whatever they can to this effort. All proceeds will go toward providing housing for the homeless or providing for their food needs.

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Macomb County responded in a big way when residents were asked to help Hurricane Katrina victims. Since its launch on Sept. 1, the MACOMB TOGETHER for Hurricane Relief program raised nearly a quarter million dollars for the American Red Cross and Salvation Army.

“We hope Macomb County will step forward and help its own the same way it did the victims of Katrina,” said Angelo Nicholas, director of the Macomb County DHS office. “The victims of homelessness don’t get the same attention on our TV sets, but this crisis is just as real and dangerous.”

Checks should be made out to the Macomb Homeless Coalition or Macomb Food Program. They may be mailed to:

**Macomb Together  
Mount Clemens, MI 48043**

Checks or cash also may be dropped off at any of the following locations:

- Macomb County Administration Building, 1 S. Main St., Mount Clemens
- Macomb County Sheriff’s Office, 43565 Elizabeth Road, Mount Clemens
- Freedom Hill County Park, Ralph A. Liberato Independence Hall, 15000 Metropolitan Parkway, Sterling Heights
- Macomb County Health Department, Southwest Health Clinic, 27690 Van Dyke Ave., Warren
- Macomb County Health Department, Southeast Health Clinic, 25401 Harper Ave., St. Clair Shores
- 42nd District Court I Building, 14713 33 Mile Road, Romeo

All county offices and courts will be closed on Dec. 23, 26 and 30.

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